loped countries for the same period was as follows:

(Rs. rer tonne)

Country	Cost of Production
U.S.A.	6174
West Germany	6090
U.K.	5125
France	5834

The major factors which have contributed to the higher cost of production of steel include rise in the cost of raw materials, electrcity prices and the railway freight, gradual deterioration in the quality parameters of the major raw materials, lack ot upgradation of technological base and poor investments in the past, etc.

The measures taken to contain cost of production of steel include raising capac'ty utilisation, increasing, productivity, improving techno-economic performance including energy saving, improved maintenance and modernisation of equipment, deiiceising ot the steel' sector to encourage the private entrepreneurs to invest in the steel sector and deregulation of prices of iron and rteel with a view to enhance efficiency and competitiveness in the steel sector leading to cost deduction. Besides, there has been reduction in import duty on steel melting scrap from 35 per cent to 10 per cent, on pig iron from 55 per cent to 35 per cent and on billets and HR Coils from 65 per cent to 45 per cent so as to facilitate imports to supplement do-meitfc availability. These measures are expected to yield favourable results.

FERTILISER',

The cost of production of various types of fertilizers differs from unit to unit depending upon the installed capacity, feedstock, vintage of the plants, etc. Fertilisers are governed under retention price-cum-subs'dy scheme under which retention prices are fixed product-wise and plant-wise which includes various elements of costs derived on the basis of combination of norms and actuals, and a reasonable return on networth. Currently, the weighted average retention price of urea is Rs. 4193 per tonne and that of DAP Rs. 5444 per tonne.

The information regarding cost of production of fertilizers in the developed countr'es is not available. However, comparison of the C&F price plus handling charges of the imported fertilisers with the average retention price of indigenous fertilizers reveals that the imported urea costs Rs. 5497 per tonne as against the retention price of Rs. 4193 per tonne of indigenous urea and the imported DAP costs 6465 per tonne against the average retention price of Rs. 9444 per tonne of indigenous DAP.

The higher retention price of indigenous DAP is mainly due to the higher input cost.

Various measures have been taken by the Fertlizer Industry to make it more efficient by reducing the consumption of inputs by suitable conservation measures including revamping and retrofitting of the fertiliser units. A number of fertiliser units have already adopted the energy con servation dev'ces to reduce the consump tion of inputs. Government have also tightened consumption norms for calculat ing retention prices Due to higher cost of inputs it has not been possi ble to achieve an absolute reduction in the cost of productoin of fertilisers. While the capital cost of fertiliser plants has risen very sharply during the last one decade, the technological improvements to cut down inputs of raw material has not taken place in that proportion. As a result, the new fertilizer units may have higher cost of product'on of fertilisers compar ed to units set up in the recent past.

Submission of report by Small Seale Industries Board

3175. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA; Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Small Scale Industries Board is likely to submit its preliminary

report *to* Government; and

(b) *to* what extent the small scale industries in the country would be benefited by' it? '

THE- MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P J. KURIEN): (a) Small Scale Industries Board is an advisory body whose function is to advise the Oovemment on all policy matters relating to the dewejopment of small scale Industries. The small scale Industries Board has been aeconstituted on 16-6-1992. The *meeting* of the Board is scheduled to be held in the near future. The Board will then make its recommendations to the Govt.

(b) Does not arise.

Establishment of fertiliser unit by Hindustan Lever Limited

3176. SHRI CHATURANAN MISH-RA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Hindustan Lever Limited is trying to wriggle out of its commitments to establish a big fertiliser unit in Kamal;

(b) whether Government are aware that Hindustan Lever Limited is showing increasing reluctance to bring in fresh investment from Unilever; and

(c) if so, the reasons given by the com pany and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHIRMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) There is no proposal of M/s. Hindustan Lever Limited to establish any fertiliser unit in Kamal pending in Government of India.

(b) No, Sir

(c) *Oats* not arise.

TFM content in soap

3177. SHRI CHATURANAN MIS] RA: Will the PRIME MINISTER pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Lever Lin ted has claimed that the percetnage TFM content in soap is not *'a com guide of its quality; and

(b) if so, the basis of their contentioi

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN TF MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPAR MENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELO MENT (SHIRMATI KRISHNA SAHI (a) and (b) No report from M/s. Hi dustan Lever Limited claiming that t percentage of TFM content in soap is n a correct guide of its quality has bei received in this Ministry.

Lowering of costs by Hindustan Leve Ltd.

3178. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD: W the PRIME MINISTER be pleased state:

ta) whether Hindustan Lever Limiti has claimed lowering cost of its produc by substituting chemical ingredients wi out affecting their quality;

(b) if so, whether such benefits ha[1] been passed on to the consumers; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN TH MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPAR': MENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOl MENT (SHIRMATI KRISHNA SAHI) (a) to (c) No report claiming reductio in cost of production of various produc manufactured by M/s. Hindustan Iev< Limited has been received in this Mini try from the company. Ccaps detergen and toiletries some of the products mani factured by M/s. Hindustan Lever Ltd are formulation products and units mam factunng these items are not required t